



**For Immediate Release
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THE GREAT PARK PURSUIT CONTINUES AT D.A.R. STATE FOREST

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) continues its *Great Park Pursuit* series of family adventure games this Saturday, June 9, at the D.A.R. State Forest in Goshen. Activities will include land navigation with a map and compass, lessons in tent pitching and safe campfire building, a hike to the fire tower, kayaking, fishing, and a falcon program.

The Great Park Pursuit is a six-week series of Saturday events in a different park each week, running May 19-June 23 in parks across the Commonwealth. More than 500 families and teams have signed up to participate. Teams that attend five of the six events will be eligible to win grand prizes, including camping and kayaking gear, donated by Eastern Mountain Sports, and each week, all participants receive free prizes and giveaways.

The first three events were held on May 19 in the Blue Hills Reservation in Milton, May 26 at Great Brook Farm State Park in Carlisle, and June 2 at Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge. As part of the game, the weekly park locations are revealed by clues to team members each week.

The Great Park Pursuit is part of a larger, national campaign called *No Child Left Inside*, which encourages people, particularly families with children, to spend less time on sedentary pursuits like video games and television, and more time actively enjoying the great outdoors. With indoor, technology-based activities replacing more traditional outdoor play, experts warn that today's children will be too disconnected from nature to appreciate their role as the environmental stewards of tomorrow. This, and the alarming rate of childhood obesity nationally and in Massachusetts, have environmentalists teaming up with health experts to promote more active, outdoor lifestyles.

"The Commonwealth's children and their families need safe outdoor opportunities for exercise to decrease their risk of obesity," said Dr. Michael Yogman, a pediatrician in Cambridge and at Harvard Medical School and a trustee of the Boston Children's Museum.

According to a 2005 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 45 percent of Massachusetts children age 6-11 are overweight or even obese. An American Heart Association study reports

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that as a result of inactivity, children in the United States are less fit today than they were a generation ago.

With nearly 450,000 acres of state parks, forests, and watershed lands, DCR encourages families to take full advantage of their robust park system.

“When you see the beauty of our state parks,” said DCR Acting Commissioner Priscilla Geigis, “you realize there’s no excuse not to get outside and appreciate the many benefits that come from connecting with nature.”

To get to the D.A.R. State Forest from the Massachusetts Turnpike, take Exit 4 and follow Interstate 91 north for 14 miles. Take Exit 19 in Northampton and follow Route 9 west for 15 miles to Goshen. Turn right onto Route 112 north and continue for 0.7 miles. The park entrance is on the right.

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